

REMARKS

In the Office Action issued on May 4, 2006, the Examiner finally rejected all pending claims based on art. The Applicant has fully considered the Office Action and cited references and submits this Reply and Amendment in response to the outstanding rejections. Reconsideration of the application for patent is requested.

The Applicant herein proposes an amendment to each independent claim that specifically indicates that the at least one layer of polymer comprises an ink formulation. Support for this proposed amendment is found in several parts of the specification as originally filed, including the discussion of the polymer element beginning on page 11 at line 13 and continuing through page 12, line 20.

The combination of a polymer comprising an ink formulation and the inclusion of an activator having a halide anion and a monovalent cation, each of which are also required by all independent claims, provides the distinct advantages recognized by the inventor and discussed in the application (see, for example, the paragraph beginning on page 4 at line 17 and the paragraph beginning on page 5 at line 30).

None of the cited references teach or suggest the use of an ink formulation as a polymer in a device for monitoring sterilization with ethylene oxide. The combination of elements recited by each pending independent claim, as amended herein, is neither disclosed nor rendered obvious by any of the cited references.

CONCLUSION

The Applicant has fully responded to the rejections listed by the Examiner in the May 4, 2006, final Office Action. Each of the pending independent claims, as amended herein, requires a polymer comprising an ink formulation and an activator having a halide anion and a monovalent cation. This combination of elements has been recognized by the inventor as a particularly desirable embodiment of the invention, and is neither taught nor suggested by the cited references.

The applicant respectfully asserts that all pending claims define patentable subject matter. A Notice of Allowability relating to all claims currently under consideration is appropriate and respectfully requested by the Applicant.

The Applicant submits the amendments made herein in order to present the rejected claims in better form for consideration on appeal, should appeal become necessary or desirable. Accordingly, entry of this Reply and Amendment submitted under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 is respectfully requested. Furthermore, an Advisory Action that includes an indication of the entry or non-entry of this Reply

and Amendment is requested.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this Reply and Amendment, or the remarks contained herein, the undersigned attorney would welcome the opportunity to discuss such matters with the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,

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